

meetings with the delegation of the Russian Federation and a visiting delegation from Kyrgyzstan to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest.

U.S. engagement in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly sends a clear message to those who are our friends and to those who are not that we will defend U.S. interests and advance the causes of peace and prosperity around the world.

REMEMBERING NATALIA ESTEMIROVA

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, on July 15, 2009, Natalia Estemirova, head of the Memorial Human Rights Center in Grozny, Chechnya, was abducted from her home and murdered. Estemirova belonged to a tradition of Russian heroism, persevering for truth and justice in spite of great danger, but she deserves recognition from all nations.

Today, as we commemorate the 1-year anniversary of her tragic passing, it is fitting to recall the words of the Memorial's founder, Andrei Sakharov:

You always have to be aware of [your ideals], even if there is no direct path to their realization. Were there no ideals, there would be no hope whatsoever. Then everything would be hopelessness, darkness—a blind alley.

In her life and in her work, Estemirova radiated hope in the face of adversity, and was steadfast in her ideals even when pursuing them entailed great risk and personal sacrifice.

Natalia Estemirova was born in 1958 to a Russian mother and a Chechen father, embodying in her parentage what was to become her life's calling: reconciling both peoples through her keen sense of justice and singular commitment to the truth. A widow and a mother, a teacher and an advocate, Estemirova found her purest voice in Chechnya. Her reporting on the second Chechen war and its aftermath exposed countless abuses committed by both sides, and provided an invaluable source of information to the outside world.

Estemirova was no stranger to controversy. On more than one occasion, her work raised the ire of the local authorities, and twice she was forced to flee her homeland. But Estemirova was not one to surrender to fear. It is said that above all she was motivated by the love of her daughter, Lana, and the desire to help the victims of Chechnya's tragic wars.

And help other people she did. From the wrongly accused in need of legal assistance to the families in search of their loved ones, Estemirova provided solace and service to generations of Russians. She pursued hidden graves, requested investigations from the authorities, and gave voice to Chechens by bringing their cases to the European Court of Human Rights.

Estemirova knew better than anyone about the tenuous stability that reigns in Chechnya. She knew that corruption there could spread to neighboring prov-

inces and corrode the institutions of the Russian state. She knew that violence and instability are seldom contained within internationally recognized borders. And she believed that justice for victims must be at the center of any effort to rebuild societies devastated by war.

On this day, we are called to remember Estemirova's generosity of spirit and dedication of purpose in spite of the many blind alleys that confronted her in life. Her voice may be silenced, but her message of hope and reconciliation endure.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO BLANQUITA CULLUM

• Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, as Blanquita Cullum's service as Governor on the Broadcasting Board of Governors comes to an end, I wish to make note of her untiring efforts to maintain United States international broadcasting during times of enormous pressures.

Throughout her tenure, Blanquita Cullum has been a champion for the mission of American international broadcasting, but also for the audiences who rely upon our international broadcasts for credible, authoritative, accurate and factual news and information.

Chief among her concerns has been for the continuation of U.S. international radio broadcasts, the form of communication which to this day remains the most readily accessible and cost-effective means of communication for billions of oppressed people living in poverty.

In our technologically driven consumer society, it escapes our attention that almost two billion people make less than \$2 a day. Blanquita Cullum has insisted, often in the face of resistance, that these populations not be abandoned and their fate left to chance.

In addition, she has argued strongly that cuts not be made to critical strategic regions of the world where regions are often one incident away from open conflict. She was among those calling for the resumption of United States international broadcasts to Russia. This call to action was given added impetus during the armed conflict between Russia and the Republic of Georgia, days after U.S. international broadcasts to Russia were ended. Even though the other members of the Board inexplicably refused to restore Russian broadcasts, Blanquita Cullum's forceful arguments helped avert their planned termination of U.S. broadcasts to the Republic of Georgia and the Ukraine.

Blanquita Cullum has global vision. International terrorism and other threats to the United States are globalized. We ignore this fact at our own risk. For example, she has argued strongly for a more robust presence of

U.S. international broadcasting to Latin America, including targeted broadcasts to Cuba, Venezuela, and other audiences whose airwaves are saturated with antidemocracy sentiments and propaganda.

Further, she has strongly argued for increased oversight and accountability with regard to U.S. international broadcasting, recognizing the importance of our broadcasts being above reproach. In the course of my own investigations, I discovered VOA broadcasts to Iran that undermined U.S. policy and gave a platform for the propaganda of our enemies. U.S. broadcasts in Arabic have also given uninterrupted and unchallenged platforms to terrorists and other enemies of the U.S. and our allies. Blanquita Cullum was the only Governor to support my and my colleagues' calls for greater transparency and accountability in our broadcasts—an ongoing need that has yet to be adequately rectified.

In the Asian sphere, she resisted efforts by the BBG bureaucracy to reduce the agency's Tibetan broadcasts and made certain that broadcasts to Burma during its violent crackdown of pro-democracy advocates were not interrupted.

Long before it became a topic of urgency, Blanquita Cullum recognized the importance of cybersecurity and argued for increased vigilance on the part of the agency's technical component to take measures necessary to ensure that BBG broadcasts and Internet assets were protected against such threats.

Finally, it is a secret to no one that Blanquita Cullum has been a strong believer in the human component of the agency's operations. She has enjoyed an engaged relationship with the agency's employees and bristled over the agency's poor showing in the annual Human Capital Survey. An organization that cannot command the confidence of its staff is not likely to be fully engaged with the audiences it portends to serve.

One needs to look no further than Governor Blanquita Cullum as the model of unselfish public service in the National and Public Interest. She will be sorely missed by those at the BBG and in Congress who still believe in the original purpose of U.S. international broadcasting. The new Board of Governors will have a challenge ahead of them as they attempt to fill her shoes and continue her efforts to reform U.S. International Broadcasting.●

TRIBUTE TO LEANNE MEDEMA

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I join my colleague, Mr. RISCH, to honor an outstanding woman as she retires from everyday working life. Leanne Medema has spent close to 20 years working on behalf of Idaho's nuclear research industry, and she has been a terrific asset to local contractors as well as to the Idaho congressional delegation over the years.